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REPORT ON A PLAN FOR THE
LOCATION OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SAN FRANCISCO

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CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

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MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

100 LARKIN STREET • CIVIC CENTER • SAN FRANCISCO 2, CALIFORNIA

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SECRETARY

April 2, 1953

Mr. Sam M. Markowitz, President
Library Commission
Civic Center
San Francisco 2, California

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Location of Public Libraries

Dear Mr. Markowitz:

It is with pleasure that I transmit to you this Report on a Plan for the Location of Public Libraries in San Francisco.

Your letter of September 7, 1952, requested the Department of City Planning to conduct a survey of the Library Department building program, and to aid in the preparation of a plan for the location of future branch libraries. This study has been carried out in response to your request and in order to establish in the Master Plan a plan for a system of branch libraries in San Francisco that will meet library and land use standards of location, and that can serve as a guide in the building program contemplated by your department.

This report has been prepared as a technical study by the staff of the Department of City Planning for review by the Library Commission, the City Librarian and members of his staff, the Mayor and other public agencies and citizen groups. Subsequently the City Planning Commission will hold a public hearing according to its responsibilities under Section 116 of the Charter, and will then consider the plan and any modification resulting from public review, for adoption as a part of the Master Plan.

The generous assistance afforded, during the course of this study, by Mr. Laurence J. Clarke, Mr. Joseph J. Allen and other members of the staff of the Library Department, and by members of the Planning and Development Committee of the Library Commission, is very much appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Paul Oppermann
Paul Oppermann
Director of Planning

C O N T E N T S

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Letter of Transmittal

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SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Conclusions

San Francisco is presently served by a public library system consisting of the main library in the Civic Center; twelve large branches, nine small branches and a deposit station in the residential community areas; and a specialized business branch in the financial district.

Although this system results in a city-wide average of one public library for each 35,000 residents, the effective service range of these branches leaves certain portions of the city without adequate library service.

Several of the branch libraries are in remote or inaccessible locations.

Lack of adequate parking facilities on or near library sites results in inconvenience to library patrons and parking congestion in the immediate vicinity.

Many of the existing library buildings are obsolete in design, cumbersome to operate and expensive to maintain.

In general, branch libraries should have a service area range of not more than one mile, and should be distributed so that all sections of the residential community areas of the city are within the service range of a public library. The spacing of libraries should vary in relation to present and prospective population densities and characteristics, physical barriers, and transit and trafficways patterns.

In general, the library system should be comprised of large branches each serving a population of 25,000 to 50,000. In areas of low population density or areas prescribed by physical barriers small branches may be developed to serve a population of 10,000 to 15,000.

Branch libraries should be located where a variety of community facilities attracts the residents of the surrounding area, Branch libraries should be easily accessible by pedestrian routes and vehicular trafficways, and should be not more than a level block from a transit stop.

Parking for motor vehicles and bicycles should be readily available on or near the site of a branch library.

Public library buildings should be simple and functional in design and in harmony with their surroundings. Buildings should be planned for the pleasure and convenience of the public, and for economy and efficiency in operation and maintenance.

Recommendations

That a system of twenty-six libraries be established to serve San Francisco.

That ten of the existing city-owned branches be retained.

That three new branch libraries be established.

That five of the existing city-owned libraries be relocated.

That six branches be built to replace those presently in rented quarters. The discontinuance of one branch and the deposit station is recommended.

That proposed alterations to the interior of the main library take place at the earliest opportunity.

That the Business Branch be enlarged and relocated to give better service to the financial-commercial district.

That available sites be acquired in the first stage of the program for effectuating this location plan.

(The following information was obtained from the company's website.)

The health, strength and growth of a democratic society depends upon a responsible and enlightened citizenry, upon people who have a constant and continuous opportunity to inform and educate themselves and to develop and strengthen their social and cultural ideals. The public library is an agency evolved in the United States to provide this opportunity. The fundamental requisite of a good public library service is that it should be freely available to all people. One important measure of the adequacy and efficiency of public library service within a given jurisdiction is the physical location and design of the library buildings in the system. This report is concerned with an analysis of the physical aspects of the public library system in San Francisco and recommends a location plan to guide the future physical development of the system.

In the spring of 1948 a proposed public library bond issue program was referred by the Library Commission to the Department of City Planning for review of its conformity with the Master Plan. Although the library bond issue was not approved by the electorate, the memorandum prepared by the Department of City Planning at that time has been used in the ensuing years by the Library Department as a guide in the preparation of its annual and long range capital improvement program. The present report, also made at the request of the

Library Commission, is in effect a reestimate of the sites recommended in the earlier study and of the program outlined therein, and a formalization of that memorandum into a specific plan that can be incorporated into the Master Plan.

This report is one of a series dealing with the location of public facilities in San Francisco. The study has been made in consultation and cooperation with the Library Department. The locations recommended have been chosen with attention to principles developed from American Library Association standards, adapted to social and geographic conditions in San Francisco, and to the principles and standards of the Land Use and Transportation Sections of the Master Plan.

I GROWTH OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM IN SAN FRANCISCO

.....

In 1878 an Act of the State Legislature authorized the creation of free public libraries in California. The San Francisco Public Library which opened on June eighth of the same year was the first of its kind in the State. A budget of \$24,000 granted by the Supervisors enabled the Trustees of the Library to purchase 6000 volumes, to rent quarters in Pacific Hall on Bush Street west of Kearny, and to appoint a librarian.

The first library was a reading room only. Books were not released for circulation, but the use of the library grew so rapidly -- 18,000 visits were reported within a month of the formal opening -- that the budget was soon doubled, and the number of volumes was increased to 30,000. It was not until June 1881 that books were circulated for home use. At this time the population of San Francisco was approximately 234,000. Library statistics for this year showed 10,500 cardholders and a circulation of 354,881 volumes.

During the next three decades the main library was established in a wing of the new city hall, and six branch libraries were opened in various districts of the city, some in rented quarters and some in permanent quarters. These branches were Mission, Potrero (later McCreery at its present location), North Beach, Richmond, Harrison (later Phelan near South Park), and Fillmore. Eight deposit stations were also set up at Ocean View, Potrero, Noe Valley, Sunset, South San Francisco, Polk

Street, Oceanside, and Rialto (at Mission and New Montgomery Streets). As the fiscal year 1905-06 started, the total number of volumes in the system was about 175,000, and there were complete files of local newspapers and periodicals. The system served a population of about 400,000.

The earthquake and fire of April 1906 completely destroyed the main library collection and all its records, and ruined or partially destroyed many of the branches and deposit stations. Only 25,000 volumes were left in the entire system.

During the following decade the library partook of the general resurrection. Generous and practical assistance was offered by libraries and private individuals all over the nation. The State Library gave duplicates of newspaper files. The Schirmer Music Library of Boston contributed the music which formed the nucleus of the now famous collection. The Carnegie Foundation gave \$750,000 of which half was to be used for permanent branch libraries and half for a main library building. When the present main library opened in February 1917, there were five city-owned branches, and two under construction: McCreery, which was rehabilitated after the earthquake; Park, built with money appropriated by the City for the purpose; and Richmond, Mission, Noe Valley, Golden Gate Valley and Sunset, constructed with Carnegie funds. In 1921 the last of the Carnegie money was used for two more permanent buildings, North Beach and Presidio. During the nineteen thirties, the Anza Branch was built with money left over from the main

library building fund; and the West Portal and Bernal branches were built with federal assistance under the W. P. A. In addition small branches and deposit stations, housed in rented stores, were opened in various parts of the city.

Statistics for 1940-41 show that the San Francisco Public Library system then consisted of 21 branches and four deposit stations. There were 525,215 volumes in the system; the 12 city-owned branches housed complete libraries ranging from 15,000 to 20,000 volumes, and the collections in rented quarters ranged from 5,000 to 10,000 volumes. There were 139,396 cardholders and the total circulation was 2,856,223 volumes. The population of San Francisco which this system served was 634,536. During the war deposit stations were opened where there was urgent need, at Hunters Point War Housing Project for instance, but all library building expansion was interrupted. By 1947 the population of the city had grown to an estimated 750,000. For the fiscal year 1946-47 the record shows 144,423 library cardholders and a total circulation of 2,731,084 volumes.

In 1948 a library bond issue of \$2,700,000 was submitted to the electorate. This included a long range building program to extend library facilities by several new branches, to replace those in rented quarters by permanent buildings, and to add a wing to the main library. The bond issue failed to carry the necessary two-thirds majority, perhaps because at this and the three preceding post-war elections 16 other

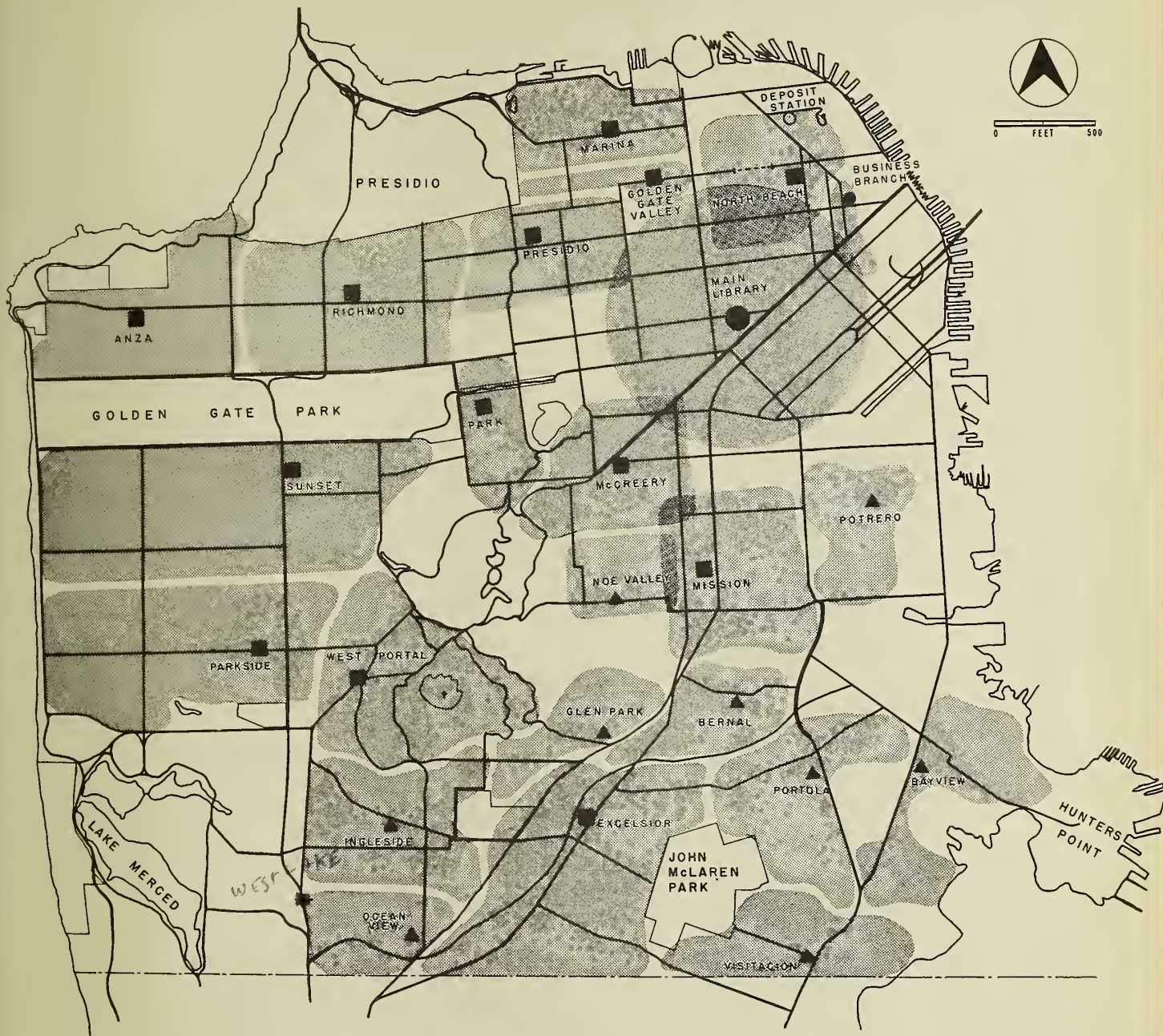
bond issues were presented. Ten of these, including the transportation, water, sewer, airport and school bonds, totaling \$173,690,000, were passed.

Before being put on the ballot, the proposed public library bond issue program was presented by the Library Commission to the Director of Planning for review for its conformity to the Master Plan, and at the request of the Library Commission a memorandum was prepared by the Department of City Planning containing detailed recommendations on the sites in the program. This memorandum has been used by the Library Commission as a guide in the curtailed building program which was possible with the funds on hand and appropriated in subsequent annual budgets. For this limited program approximately \$400,000 was available for the Parkside and Potrero Branches which were housed in permanent quarters in 1951, and for the Marina Branch which is scheduled to be in operation next year.

The Public Library system in San Francisco today consists of the main library located in the Civic Center, twelve large branches, Richmond, Mission, Sunset, West Portal, Anza, McCreery, North Beach (Chinatown), Park, Presidio, Golden Gate Valley, Excelsior and Parkside; nine small branches, Noe Valley, Ingleside, Glen Park, Bay View, Portola, Ocean View, Visitacion Valley, Bernal and Potrero, a specialized business branch in rented quarters in the Russ Building and a station in the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood House. In addition to this existing system, construction will soon start on the new Marina

Branch which will be a large branch. Of the larger branches only the Excelsior is in rented quarters. On the other hand, Noe Valley, Bernal and the recently built Potrero Branch are the only small branches housed in library-owned facilities. The other six are in rented quarters.

The total number of items in the present library system is approximately 950,000. This includes unbound periodicals, pamphlets, and other documentary materials as well as 653,027 bound volumes. There are 138,024 cardholders, and in 1951-52 there was a circulation of 2,462,524 volumes. The population which supports the system is 775,357 according to the 1950 U. S. Census of Population.



PUBLIC FACILITIES IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EXISTING PUBLIC LIBRARIES - 1953

LIBRARY

- MAIN LIBRARY
- LARGE BRANCH LIBRARY
- ▲ SMALL BRANCH LIBRARY
- BUSINESS BRANCH LIBRARY
- DEPOSIT STATION
- ▨ SERVICE AREA

1

PLATE

II ORGANIZATION AND SERVICES OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

A Library Commission of eleven members appointed by the Mayor and serving overlapping four year terms, governs the policy of the Library Department. The City Librarian is in full administrative control of the system, and is assisted by the Secretary to the Commission and a staff of 276 employees, of which 83 are full-time professional workers, 20 are full-time clerical workers, and 68 are part-time sub-professional and clerical workers. There are 67 pages who work part-time, and 38 full and part-time maintenance employees. The Library Department is an integral part of the city government and derives its funds from tax receipts.

Main Library

The main library uses a closed stack system for its general non-fiction collection. The seven floors of stacks occupy the north side of the building at the Civic Center. The San Francisco Library was the first public library to use an open shelf system which it does in the main reading room, an open shelf department of over 40,000 volumes housing the fiction collection, the foreign fiction collection, and a non-fiction browsing collection of some 3,000 volumes.

The Reference Department is administered by a specially trained staff of assistants. In addition to the comprehensive assemblage of reference tools, the department is particularly rich in its collection of foreign language and technical

dictionaries. A telephone service is maintained by this department and handles approximately 100,000 inquiries a year.

The Music Department has about 12,000 volumes of music, and histories, biographies, and technical books on music, and nearly 16,000 pieces of sheet music, most of which may be circulated. The music collection is on open shelves, and there is a piano and practice room for the use of potential borrowers.

More than five hundred U. S. and foreign newspapers are available in current editions in the Newspaper Room. Bound files of the New York Times are kept here, and files of the San Francisco daily newspapers. In the earthquake and fire of 1906 all the library's newspaper files were destroyed, but this collection was rebuilt so that today there is on file the Bulletin from October 1855, the Alta California from January 1861, the Call and the Examiner from 1877, and the Chronicle from 1885. Because vital statistic records were destroyed in the fire, these old newspaper files have proved valuable in substantiating records of births, marriages and deaths, in addition to having general historical interest.

The Library subscribes to approximately 2,000 foreign and U. S. magazines for its Periodical Room and for the branches. Files of most of the important English and U. S. magazines and trade journals are bound. Many of the current and bound magazines are issued for home use.

The Children's Room, where the books are invitingly arranged on open shelves, conducts many activities such as story hours for young children, teen-age Forums, Scout and other club meetings, and general displays to stimulate the good reading habits of young borrowers.

School libraries in San Francisco are under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, but many teachers and students use the Public Library to supplement school libraries. The Library also conducts story hours for classes in the public and parochial schools and gives instruction and encouragement to young pupils in the use of the library.

There is an Art Department, and several rare and fine book collections housed in the main library. The San Francisco Public Library has also been designated by the federal government as a depository for public documents and therefore receives free of charge all publications of the U. S. Government. The library contains an assembly hall which is available without charge to many professional and cultural groups.

The cataloguing of all library books is done in the Central Catalogue Department of the main library, which maintains the official catalogue wherein is recorded the disposition of all books in the system. In 1951-52 approximately 40,000 volumes were acquired and half as many withdrawn from the collection.

Daily messenger service to each of the branches collects



and distributes volumes throughout the system and makes possible inter-library loans between the main library and the branches.

Branch Libraries

At the present time the branch system consists of the twelve large and nine small branches, the business branch and the deposit station described above. This last is maintained as a temporary convenience by the Telegraph Hill Neighborhood House, and is not comparable in service or influence to a branch library. The business branch is a specialized extension of the reference library to serve the immediate daily reference and research needs of business firms in the financial district. The difference between a large branch and a small branch is in the personnel required, the hours of operation, the extent and population of the potential service area, and the size and scope of the book collection.

The larger branches offer many of the services which the main library supplies. Several of them, with sufficient budgets and with very little added to their present book collections, could function as major branches or sub-main libraries, and could foster small stations or mobile units within their section of the city.

There are separate children's rooms in five of the branches, and areas specially designed for children in all of them. Each branch is provided with a reference collection, tailored to

the characteristics of the population it serves. There are meeting places in many of the branches which are used by neighborhood cultural groups as well as by the library itself in its educational and recreational programs.

The following table shows the number of volumes circulated from each of the branches in 1951-52, the number of registered cardholders, and the number of volumes in each library. There is also an estimate of the resident population in the service area of each branch.

BRANCH LIBRARIES - STATISTICAL REPORT 1951-52

<u>Large Branches</u>	<u>Volumes Circulated</u>	<u>Cardholders</u>	<u>Volumes in Library</u>	<u>Estimated Population of Service Area</u>
Richmond	188,340	8,292	22,774	50,000
Parkside	185,865	6,748	14,947	35,000
Sunset	151,197	8,143	19,465	50,000
West Portal	146,843	7,520	17,566	25,000
Golden Gate	126,790	5,759	14,320	30,000
Anza	113,217	4,391	20,062	25,000
Mission	110,436	6,998	17,311	45,000
North Beach	107,808	4,418	14,261	60,000
Park	102,624	4,729	15,255	20,000
Excelsior	86,151	5,060	9,299	40,000
McGregory	85,356	4,054	12,805	45,000
Presidio	78,888	4,398	14,706	35,000
<u>Small Branches</u>				
Noe Valley	63,075	2,721	13,543	15,000
Ingleside	61,594	3,247	10,644	20,000
Bernal	60,892	3,024	12,746	10,000
Ocean View	55,204	2,736	7,809	10,000
Visitation	55,024	3,248	7,672	15,000
Bayview	45,681	2,545	8,023	30,000
Potrero	44,279	1,028	6,236	10,000
Portola	40,798	1,937	7,390	20,000
Glen Park	32,544	1,786	7,280	10,000

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To estimate the adequacy and efficiency of the physical aspects of the existing public library system in San Francisco, and to guide the present preparation of a general plan of branch library location and the future selection of specific sites, principles have been developed which are a basic and integral part of the plan for the location of public libraries. These principles were derived from American Library Association standards, adapted to the traffic patterns, topography, land use and population characteristics of San Francisco, and modified by the Redevelopment program and the provisions and projections of the Transportation and Land Use Sections of the Master Plan.

Service Area

1. In general, branch libraries should have a service area range of not more than one mile, and should be distributed so that all sections of the residential community areas of the city are within the service range of a public library. The spacing of branch libraries should vary in relation to present and prospective population densities and characteristics, physical barriers, and transit and trafficways patterns.

The present San Francisco public library system, including the Marina Branch and the immediate service area of the main library, is so distributed that all residential areas in the city are within a mile of a branch library except the Crocker-Amazon tract south of the Excelsior District, the Lake Merced

area, and the Sunset District west of Sunset Boulevard. However, the service areas ascribed to the branch libraries deviate from this standard one mile radius because of topographic and created physical barriers, such as parks and freeways, and traditional transit patterns. These service areas cover most of the residential districts except the northeast corner of the city, a portion of Pacific Heights, the southwest section of the Western Addition, the Lake Merced area, and a swath through the center of the city which includes Diamond Heights.

The proposed plan fills in these gaps by the addition of three new branches, the discontinuance of one branch, and the recommended removal of seven of the existing branches to new locations.

Size and Population

2. In general, the library system should be comprised of large branches each serving a population of 25,000 to 50,000. In areas of low population density or areas prescribed by physical barriers small branches may be developed to serve a population of 10,000 to 15,000.

The present system of 22 libraries results in a city-wide average of one public library for each 35,000 residents. The plan proposes a system which will serve an estimated population of 34,000 per branch on the basis of population projections for 1970.

In the present system all but two of the large branches

serve an estimated resident population between 25,000 and 50,000. The Park Branch, because of poor location, is limited in its influence to a population of approximately 20,000. The present North Beach Branch in Chinatown, on the other hand, is in a very densely populated area and includes in its service range an estimated 60,000 persons.

The small branches in the existing system were established in areas of low population density or areas with a shifting population, and in areas limited by definite physical barriers. Branches in rented quarters in the southern part of the city such as Ocean View and Visitacion are examples of libraries designed to serve an area built up with single family residences. The service areas of the Potrero and Bernal branches are cut off by steep hills and freeways, and it is evident that the effect of these branches will not be felt beyond the limits imposed by these barriers.

The plan proposes that such small branches as these last be maintained in their present category, but that small branches in areas with an increasing or gradually stabilizing population be so located and designed that their size and effectiveness can be increased as required.

Location

3. Branch libraries should be located where a variety of community facilities attracts the residents of the surrounding area. Branch libraries should be easily accessible by pedestrian routes and vehicular trafficways, and should be not more

than a level block from a transit stop.

In the last half century libraries have moved from the cloister to the market place, During the early post-holocaust years of rebuilding and expansion, speed and economy were given precedence by the Library Department, and sites were selected in some instances because they were immediately available rather than appropriate. In order to stretch limited funds as far as possible, the Library practiced the sometimes false economy of using property declared surplus by other city departments, rather than choosing sites whose location and size were preeminently suitable for library purposes. Thus, several of the permanent branches are not readily accessible to the public they were built to serve. Golden Gate Valley is an example of a branch whose circulation has always suffered because it was built too far from a center of community activity. The Sunset Branch is an example of the other fault of using up left-overs. It is cramped on a small corner of the Jefferson Elementary School site, and now crowds the school, and is itself prevented from expanding.

Branches near centers of community business or other activity and on transit lines or within a level block of a transit stop reflect their accessibility in a steady high book circulation. Those branches which are up or down hill from public transit, or more than a block away from active neighborhood centers, tend to be a little lower in the circulation scale. The Richmond Branch, which is between two busy commercial

streets, within half a block of parallel transit lines, and within a block of two transfer points on a crosstown bus has perhaps the most accessible location of the branches, while Anza and Golden Gate Valley are examples of libraries somewhat remote of access.

Parking

4. Parking for motor vehicles and bicycles should be readily available on or near the site of a branch library.

None of the present branches has on-site parking facilities, but several of them, notably the Richmond Branch, are surrounded by open space which might well be redesigned for parking, for the benefit of library patrons and the relief of congestion in the surrounding area. It is recommended that in the selection of future sites, ease of parking be considered both as an inducement to library use, and for the general advantage of the neighborhood.

Appearance and Design

5. Public library buildings should be simple and functional in design and in harmony with their surroundings. Buildings should be planned for the pleasure and convenience of the public, and for economy and efficiency in operation and maintenance.

Modern functional design and the present emphasis on salesmanship have revolutionized the physical appearance as well as the location of libraries. The mausoleum-like monuments,

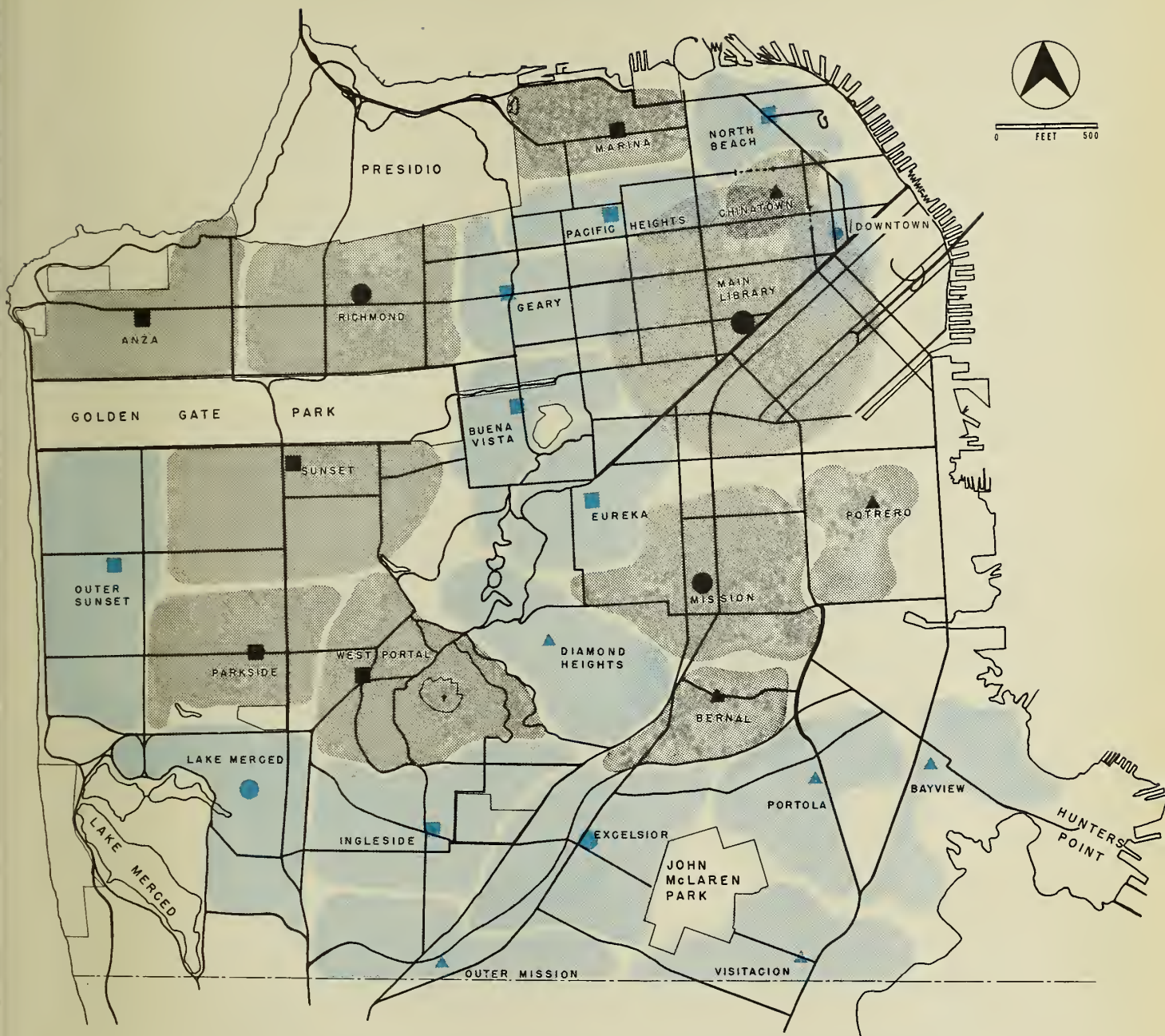
approached by noble flights of steps, buffered from the bustle of the streets by lawns and protective planting, are being replaced by attractive book-lined club rooms, easily accessible from a busy thoroughfare with inviting interiors often visible from the street.

The design of branch libraries in San Francisco is a reflection of the taste of their time, the changing theory of library design, and funds available for construction. The McCreery Branch is a monument to civic pride, while the Park Branch immortalizes civic parsimony. The branches built with Carnegie funds are also dignified monuments to learning and to the bounty of the Foundation. The Anza and West Portal branches, built in the nineteen thirties, are more gracious and pleasing, but still quiet and remote, with something of a cloistered air.

The location and design of Parkside and Potrero, the two recently opened permanent branches, reflect the basic change that has come in library building theory in recent years. They are built in the midst of neighborhood shopping centers, and designed for efficiency and economy in maintenance and operation. Their friendly interiors are an invitation to the passer-by.

The Potrero Branch exemplifies another theory in modern library design. It is readily adaptable to commercial use and hence has a good potential resale value should the Library Department find the location an unprofitable one for its

purposes. This policy of convertibility of design lends flexibility to a system which might otherwise become too rigid with the construction of permanent branches.



PUBLIC FACILITIES IN THE MASTER PLAN OF SAN FRANCISCO

PROPOSED LIBRARY LOCATION PLAN

LIBRARY

2

PLATE

- MAIN LIBRARY
- MAJOR BRANCH LIBRARY
- LARGE BRANCH LIBRARY
- ▲ SMALL BRANCH LIBRARY
- DOWNTOWN BRANCH LIBRARY
- SERVICE AREA-EXISTING LIBRARY
- SERVICE AREA-NEW LIBRARY LOCATION

The library system proposed in this plan for the location of public libraries in San Francisco consists of the main library, four major branches, twelve large branches and eight smaller branches, serving the residential community areas of the city. In addition it is suggested that a branch be established in the downtown financial-commercial district to absorb the present business branch and enlarge its function to more general use. Of the fourteen existing city-owned branches, ten (including the Marina) would be retained.

The proposed plan includes the construction of nine large branches and five smaller ones. While it is recognized that in the future an enlargement of the present main library will be necessary, the current proposal of the Library Commission to remodel and renovate the interior of the existing structure is endorsed as a practical means of making better use of the existing space.

The branches which are proposed for continuance in the system are Anza, Richmond, Marina, Sunset, Parkside, West Portal, Mission, Potrero, Bernal and Chinatown (presently called the North Beach Branch). Richmond and Mission are proposed as major branches to serve the northern and central sections of the city. The others would maintain their present status in the system except for Chinatown, which might become a small branch.

It is recommended that three new branches be built to serve residential areas at present beyond the effective range of any branch: one in the vicinity of Washington Square in North Beach, one to serve the outer Sunset district, and a branch in the Lake Merced area which could be the major branch for the southwest section of the city.

Six new branches are planned to replace those presently in rented quarters. Ingleside would be a large branch, to be removed from its present location at 387 Ashton Avenue, to the vicinity of Ocean and Plymouth Avenues. Excelsior, which is proposed as a major branch for the southeastern section of the city, would remain in the vicinity of Ocean Avenue and Mission Street. Bayview, Portola and Visitacion would be replaced by permanent facilities in their same general locations, and would for the present remain small branches. Ocean View at 111 Broad Street, would be replaced by a branch in the outer Mission district near the junction of the Mission Freeway, San Jose Avenue and Alemany Boulevard.

Five branches are proposed to replace present permanent branches: Pacific Heights, near Fillmore and Jackson Streets, to replace Golden Gate Valley; Geary, at Masonic Avenue and Geary Boulevard, to replace Presidio; Buena Vista, near Haight Street and Masonic Avenue, to replace Park; Eureka Valley, near 18th and Collingwood Streets, to replace McCreery; and Diamond Heights, in the Diamond Heights shopping center, to replace in part the Noe Valley and Glen Park Branches.

Except for a few peripheral blocks all residential areas in San Francisco are within a mile of one or more of the library locations recommended in this plan.

The estimated population to be served by the large branches varies from 25,000 to 50,000, while the small branches will serve an estimated population of 10,000 to 15,000. In general, the large branches are proposed for areas with a reasonably stable population. Several of the small branches, notably Bayview, are in areas where a substantial increase in population is anticipated within the next score of years. It is therefore recommended that allowance be made for expansion in considering sites and plans for the new branch buildings.

Priorities for site acquisition and building construction are the primary responsibility of the Library Department. However, it is suggested that available vacant sites at recommended locations be acquired as soon as possible, and that consideration be given to carrying out the proposed plan in the following stages.

The first phase of the building program would include alterations to the interior of the main library, establishment of the branches in the North Beach, outer Sunset and Lake Merced areas, and the replacement of branches at Ingleside, Excelsior, and Bayview. Before constructing a permanent branch library in the outer Sunset, it is recommended that the Library Commission at the earliest possible time establish library service in rented quarters at a central location in this district.

During the second phase of the program, within five to ten years, it is proposed that Portola and Visitacion be replaced by permanent quarters, and the new branch in Diamond Heights be built.

The new branches at Pacific Heights, Geary, Buena Vista, and Eureka Valley are proposed for construction in the nineteen sixties, during the third phase of the building program. The replacement of the Ocean View branch is also reserved for this phase because it is possible that within the next decade the Library Department may be in a position to extend its sphere of influence beyond the present boundaries of the city and county. If this were the case the question of library location at the southern boundary of the city would have to be restudied and at present it seems probable that a major branch at the location of the Daly City Public Library would serve the entire area more adequately than a small branch in the outer Mission.

The establishment of the suggested Downtown Branch is not keyed into the building program. This branch should be established at the discretion of the Library Commission in quarters near the corner of Kearny and Post Streets. Similarly, the construction of a new wing at the main library is not integrated with the present program. The proposed alterations to the interior, which should take place at the earliest opportunity, will create much needed work space from the extravagant voids which accompany the architectural grandeurs of the present building.

Recommended Locations

The following descriptive list of the twenty-four branch library locations recommended in this plan is arranged by the residential community areas now being used in the Department of City Planning as a basis for Master Plan studies.

Community 1 - Outer Richmond

Anza Branch - existing branch library, 37th Avenue, near Anza Street.

Although this library is somewhat secluded, it is retained in the plan because it is a well established branch in a gracious and pleasing building and serves a stable built-up community.

Community 2 - Richmond

Richmond Branch - existing branch library, 9th Avenue between Geary Boulevard and Clement Street.

This branch, built in 1909 has now served three generations of neighborhood children, and has many loyal supporters among the adults of the community. It is very conveniently located between a general business and a shopping center with excellent transit facilities, and could become the major branch for the northwest section of the city. It is suggested that the space around the building be redesigned to allow some off-street parking and to give the library a more welcoming aspect.

Community 3 - Marina

Marina Branch - branch library under construction, Chestnut Street near Fillmore Street.

This modern, well designed branch, situated at the edge of a busy shopping center, will serve an estimated 35,000 people, many of whom now live beyond the effective range of any public library.

Community 4 - Downtown

Chinatown Branch - existing branch library, Powell Street near Jackson Street.

This branch is in a mixed residential-commercial neighborhood and while there is no shopping focus in the immediate vicinity there are many centers of Chinese group activity near the branch. It is on a transit line and half a block from a transfer point. The library is crowded every afternoon and evening with school children and young adults from the surrounding densely populated neighborhood who use the space as a study hall. It is anticipated that the pressure on this branch will be relieved by the new North Beach Branch, and by the gradual decrease in residential density which is expected for the entire area in the next twenty years. The Downtown Branch, if established, would also divert some of the patronage from this library.

North Beach Branch - new library in the vicinity of Washington Square.

Washington Square is the traditional center of the North Beach district. A library facing the square or near it would serve the residents of Telegraph Hill, North Beach and Russian Hill. The estimated present population of this area is 35,000.

Community 5 - Western Addition

Pacific Heights Branch - new location near the corner of Fillmore and Jackson Streets.

This library is planned as a replacement for the Golden Gate Valley Branch, whose location on Green Street at Octavia Street has always been a deterrent to its influence, and whose effectiveness will be further narrowed by the Marina Branch. The proposed location is at the edge of a firmly established shopping district with a wide range of customers and near the intersection of four transit lines. Because of the transit pattern, the effective service area of this branch would probably extend from Van Ness Avenue to Walnut Street and from Union Street to California Street. A population of approximately 30,000 persons is projected for this area.

Geary Branch - new location near the intersection of Geary Boulevard and Masonic Avenue.

This library location would replace the Presidio Branch on Sacramento Street near Lyon Street. The proposed site is near

a new shopping center of city-wide importance at the intersection of two major transit lines. The service area planned for this branch is diverse in residential character. It encompasses Presidio Heights, the new developments at Laurel Heights and Anza Vista, part of a redevelopment project area, and the Fillmore valley from Geary Street to Fulton Street. The projected population of this area is 35,000.

Community 6 - Buena Vista

Buena Vista Branch - new location at Masonic Avenue and Haight Street.

This library is proposed as a replacement for the Park Branch which is obsolete in building type, and in an out-of-the-way location on Page Street near Cole Street. The removal of the branch to the busy Haight Street shopping center, with excellent transit facilities, would extend its sphere of influence to Fulton Street on the north, east as far as Scott Street and around the northern slopes of Twin Peaks. This area presently has a residential population of about 36,000, and an estimated future population of 45,000.

Community 7 - Mission

Eureka Valley Branch - new location at 18th and Collingwood Streets.

This library is suggested as a relocation of the McCreery branch. It would bring the branch into the community shopping

center, and near the new school and recreation area. The branch would serve the eastern slopes of Twin Peaks and Buena Vista, as well as the whole Eureka Valley. The 1970 population of this area is estimated as 45,000.

Mission Branch - existing branch library, 24th and Bartlett Streets.

This branch, with a long tradition of useful service is retained in the system because of its excellent location near the junction of two shopping centers and a variety of other community facilities. It is suggested that this branch be developed as the major branch to serve its section of the city.

Diamond Heights - new location in the neighborhood center of the Diamond Heights Redevelopment Project.

When redevelopment takes place on Diamond Heights, it is expected that the new well planned shopping center, with its parking and transit facilities and nearby schools and playgrounds will attract people from beyond the immediately surrounding neighborhood. A branch library here could include in its service area Glen Park and the new developments on the southern slopes of Twin Peaks. It would replace the Glen Park Branch, and share with the Mission Branch the Noe Valley service area. Approximately 15,000 people live in the area now and the projected population, including the 7,500 residents planned for the redevelopment area, is about 25,000. This library could start as a small branch, but should be so situated

and designed that it can be enlarged to meet possible future demands.

Community 8 - Potrero-Bernal

Potrero Branch - existing branch library, 20th Street between Connecticut and Arkansas Streets.

Bernal Branch - existing branch library, Cortland Avenue at Andover Street.

The existing Potrero and Bernal Branches with their sharply defined service areas are retained in the system as small branches.

Community 9 - Bayshore

Bayview Branch - new library to replace existing branch in rented quarters, Third Street near Oakdale Avenue.

It is recommended that a permanent branch be built near the present rented quarters at 5025 Third Street. This location has proved its usefulness and drawing power by including in its active service area both the Hunters Point and Double Rock neighborhoods. Because the projected population for this area is approximately 40,000, it is further recommended that the new library building be planned so that its facilities may be expanded when the need arises.

Portola Branch - new library to replace existing branch in rented quarters, San Bruno Avenue near Silver Avenue.

The Portola Branch, presently located in rented quarters at 2434 San Bruno Avenue, is also retained in the system as a permanent branch near its present location in the San Bruno shopping center. The service area of this branch will not be seriously affected by the Bayshore Freeway which bisects the area, because of the adequate provision of both vehicular and pedestrian crossings. The population of this area is expected to increase during the next twenty years to a projected 25,000. It is therefore recommended that this branch be designed for expansion to meet the needs of the increased population.

Visitation Valley - new library, to replace existing branch in rented quarters, 37 Leland Avenue.

This branch, in rented quarters in the shopping center of a stable, self-contained neighborhood, is recommended as a permanent branch near its present location.

Community 10 - Outer Mission

Excelsior Branch - new library to replace existing branch in rented quarters, Mission Street near Ocean Avenue.

This branch, in rented quarters at 4465 Mission Street, has a service area and circulation which strain its limited facilities. It is recommended that a large permanent branch to serve as the major branch for the southeast section of the city, be built near the present location at the northern end of the Excelsior shopping district.

Outer Mission - new location near the junction of Alemany Boulevard, San Jose Avenue and the Mission Freeway.

It is proposed that the present Ocean View Branch at 111 Broad Street be removed to this new location so that its service area can be extended to include portions of the Crocker-Amazon district and the outer Mission as well as the Ocean View district.

Community 11 - West of Twin Peaks

Ingleside Branch - new location at Ocean and Plymouth Avenues.

It is recommended that this branch be moved from the rented store at 387 Ashton Street to permanent quarters at the suggested location which is on a busy thoroughfare near a transit intersection. It is also recommended that it be operated as a large branch to increase its effective range and include the Sunnyside district in its service area. The population which this branch would serve is expected to be 35,000 within the next twenty years.

West Portal Branch - existing branch library, Lenox Way at Ulloa Street.

This pleasantly designed library is well located and firmly established in the community it serves.

Lake Merced Branch - new library in Stonestown shopping center.

The success of the new shopping center in Stonestown, its wide influence and drawing power and its central location in the Lake Merced area, make it the natural choice for the location of a new branch library to serve the residents of the rapidly expanding developments in the southwest section of the city. It has been suggested that this branch be developed as a major branch and cultural center for this quarter of the city.

Community 12 - Sunset

Sunset Branch - existing branch library, 18th Avenue near Irving Street.

Although this branch is cramped on its present site, and in need of renovation, it is recommended that it remain in the system because of its very convenient location in relation to the Irving Street shopping center and the crosstown bus line which runs from Sea Cliff in the Richmond District to the southern boundary of the city at Mission Street.

Parkside Branch - existing branch library, Taraval Street and 22nd Avenue.

This attractive new branch is a pilot project and proving ground for the entire program of public library building and expansion in San Francisco. Since moving into the new quarters, the branch has more than doubled its circulation, and almost tripled the number of active cardholders.

Outer Sunset Branch - new library in or near the Sunset Community Center.

The outer Sunset district with a present population of approximately 25,000, is for the most part beyond the effective service range of a public library. The northern edge of the district has a long established east-west transit movement on Judah Street and hence is presently drawn into the range of the Sunset Branch. A similar situation exists in the southern portion of the district, with the Taraval Street transit line and the pull of the Parkside Branch.

To serve the middle reaches of the outer Sunset, it is recommended that for the present a branch library be established in rented quarters at a central location in the vicinity of the Sunset Community Center which is now under construction. Because there is no commercial district or other center in the community which attracts people from the entire area, it is anticipated by the Department of City Planning that the Sunset Community Center, when fully developed with proposed educational and recreational facilities, will become the focal point for community activity which the outer Sunset now lacks. As such it will then be a good location for a branch library.

The selection of a permanent site, however, will be determined by the Library Commission upon further development of the district. In the present interim period, use of library service in temporary quarters near the Community Center will help to establish the need for and validity of locating a branch in or near the Center.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The following references on public libraries have been used in the development of the principles and standards for this report. Instead of weighting the text with foot notes, these are listed as a general acknowledgement of indebtedness:

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Present and prospective population estimates were made by the Department of City Planning, based on the 1950 U.S. Census of Population and on the City-wide Land Use Plan.

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